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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/577,916	05/01/2006	Ryoji Funahashi	062440	6898
38834	7590	04/13/2009		
WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP 1250 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, NW SUITE 700 WASHINGTON, DC 20036			EXAMINER	TAL XIUYU
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1795	
MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE			
04/13/2009	PAPER			

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/577,916	<b>Applicant(s)</b> FUNAHASHI, RYOJI
	<b>Examiner</b> Xiuyu Tai	<b>Art Unit</b> 1795

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If no period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 February 2009.  
 2a) This action is FINAL.      2b) This action is non-final.  
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-6 is/are pending in the application.  
 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
 6) Claim(s) 1-6 is/are rejected.  
 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.  
 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
 a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:  
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application  
 6) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114***

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 2/27/2009 has been entered.

### ***Response to Arguments***

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-6 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection necessitated by applicant's amendments.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Blasco et al ("Magnetic properties and structure of  $\text{LaNi}_{3/4}\text{Mn}_{1/4}\text{O}_3$ ", *J. Phys.: Condens. Matter*, 13 No. 30, 2001, 729-736).

5. Regarding claims 1, Blasco et al disclose a perovskite material having composition represented by  $\text{LaNi}_{3/4}\text{Mn}_{1/4}\text{O}_3$  (ABSTRACT), which satisfies the formula cited in the claim. The reference of Chiba is silent about whether this composite oxide

has a negative Seebeck coefficient at 100C or higher. However, since the composition of Chiba meets the formula cited in the claim, it is inherent to have the same properties as the claimed oxide, particularly the Seebeck coefficient.

6. Regarding claims 2, Blasco et al disclose a perovskite material having composition represented by  $\text{LaNi}_{3/4}\text{Mn}_{1/4}\text{O}_3$  (ABSTRACT), which satisfies the formula cited in the claim. The reference of Chiba is silent about whether this composite oxide has an electrical resistivity of 10 or less at 100C or higher. However, since the composition of Chiba meets the formula cited in the claim, it is inherent to have the same properties as the claimed oxide, particularly the electrical resistivity.

7. Regarding claims 3 and 4, Blasco does not indicate whether the composition is an n-type thermoelectric material. However, since the composition of Blasco meets the formula cited in the claim, it is fully capable of functioning as an n-type thermoelectric material.

8. Regarding claims 5 and 6, since the component of the cited thermoelectric module is the n-type material comprising the claimed oxide, the composition represented by  $\text{LaNi}_{3/4}\text{Mn}_{1/4}\text{O}_3$  as disclosed by Blasco meet the formula cited in the claim. Therefore,  $\text{LaNi}_{3/4}\text{Mn}_{1/4}\text{O}_3$  of Blasco reads on the instant thermoelectric module.

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Xiuyu Tai whose telephone number is 571-270-1855. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 7:30 AM - 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Alexa Neckel can be reached on 571-272-1446. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/X. T./  
Examiner, Art Unit 1795

3/24/2009

/Alexa D. Neckel/  
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1795